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IOWA DEER HUNTING



IOWA CONSERVATION COMMISSION

300 - 4th STREET
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

WHITE-TAILED DEER

The white-tailed deer are Iowa's sole big game animals and are found in every county of the state. Although nearly gone from Iowa by 1900, white-tailed deer since have adapted to conditions associated with intensive agriculture and are now limited principally by hunting. They are found in greater numbers in the wooded, rolling hills of western and southern Iowa, but are often found miles from preferred woodland in the flat-country corn fields.

The food preferences of deer are corn, soybeans and alfalfa, together with browse consisting of green leaves, forbs, shrubs and trees in the summer and buds and twigs of trees in the winter.

Deer are nocturnal and bed down for the day a few hours after sunrise and become active again a few hours before sunset. They alternately feed and bed down during the night. They ruminate their food during less active periods.

The breeding season or "rut" begins in October and frequently extends into February. It ends with the bucks dropping their antlers. A new set of antlers begins to develop in April. They are covered during growth with a soft, live tissue called "velvet." This is rubbed off on small trees and shrubs in September when growth ceases. Antlers are used for defense during the breeding season.

The females, or does, each produce from one to three young, or fawns, annually. Nearly all adult does produce twins. It is possible for a deer herd to double its numbers each year if there is no mortality.

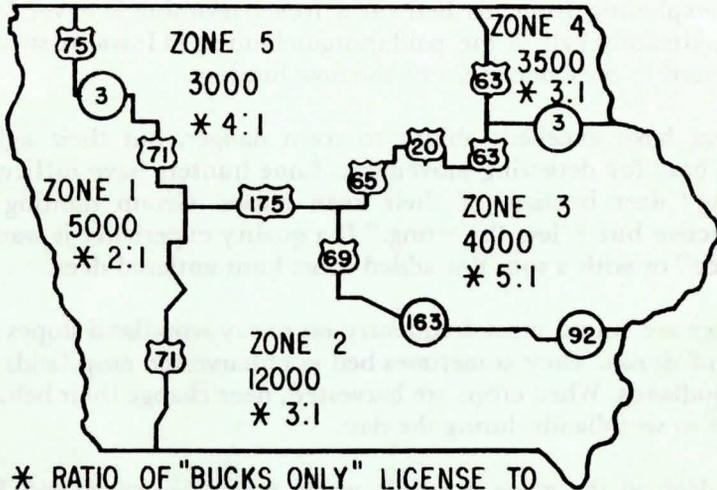
Deer are gregarious much of the year and travel together in family groups. In winter, family groups gather in the best protective cover and form herds. Orphan fawns in nature are very rare. The does commonly leave their young and watch over them from a distance. The spotted coat of the fawn provides protective coloration while they lie motionless when danger approaches.

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1973 DEER ZONES AND LICENSE QUOTAS

(Shotgun Muzzleloader)

SEASON DATES : Dec. 1-5



* RATIO OF "BUCKS ONLY" LICENSE TO "EITHER SEX" LICENSE.

This year the modified bucks only season is being expanded to all five hunting zones. Antlered deer only licenses will be issued to the majority of the hunters although in different ratios according to each hunting zone (see map). This ratio system of "bucks only" license to "either sex" license applies to both paid shotgun hunters and landowner-tenant license holders. Bucks only or antlered deer refer to deer having at least one forked antler.

LICENSE FEES

Resident Hunting	\$ 5.00
Resident Combination Hunting and Fishing	\$ 8.00
Non-Resident Hunting (small game only)	\$25.00

DEER HUNTING PERMITS

Shotgun	\$10.00
Bow and Arrow	\$10.00

NO NON-RESIDENT DEER HUNTING PERMITS ISSUED

DEER HUNTING

Bagging a "wily whitetail" is a memorable experience. The snorting buck exploding from his bed on a frosty morning is never forgotten. Approximately half of the paid shotgun hunters in Iowa are successful as compared to only one in six of the bow hunters.

Deer have excellent ability to scent danger, but their sight serves them best for detecting movement. Lone hunters have difficulty "out witting" deer because of their keen senses. Group hunting is more productive but is less "sporting." If a quality experience is wanted, "go it alone" or with a son. For added sport hunt antlered deer.

Deer are found most frequently on sunny woodland slopes or at the head of draws. They sometimes bed in unharvested crop fields adjacent to woodlands. When crops are harvested, deer change their behavior and return to woodlands during the day.

A deer on the move normally works upwind or crosswind. He rarely will move downwind unless he is in the open. Wind currents move up the draws during the day and deer bedded at the top can scent danger. In Iowa these draws frequently extend into agricultural fields. This gives added advantage to the deer for he can see movements in the open.

Deer regularly use trails in their movements within their home ranges. They seldom change their habits when hunting season arrives. Possibly the best hunting method for two hunters working together is for one hunter to move through the woods while the other is on "stand" on a well used trail.

Snow cover causes deer to move out well ahead of drivers and makes them easy to see. Without snow cover deer frequently lie still and let the hunter walk by. After he is gone, they may sneak out behind the driver. This often happens when deer are driven downwind.

When the weather is windy, woodlands are very noisy. This makes deer nervous and they very often move into the open, or are "fidgety" and move about the woods more. A lone hunter can take advantage of this by taking a stand within the area.

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